

Adult Friends for Youth

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E-mail: afy@afyhawaii.com • Web Page: http://www.afyhawaii.com

Testimony of Support on Bill 13, CD2

Presented to Council Chair, Ernest Y. Martin
And Members of the City Council of Honolulu.

By McKay Schwenke,
Vice President, Adult Friends for Youth

Date: June 2nd, 2015

Aloha Council Members,

On behalf of Adult Friends for Youth (AFY), I strongly support the proposed amendments by Council Chair Ernest Martin, in placing a \$150,000 cap on GIA awards to free up a redistribution of Grants in Aid (GIA) funds to be reflected in Bill 13, CD2 that provides funding for non-profit organizations that were not initially selected by the City Administration. I strongly support also the allocation of moneys from the general funds to help replenish such organizations whose GIA funds were reduced due to this redistribution initiative and to support other organizations under consideration.

AFY services over 400 youths each and every week. These funds are critical to our survival, but more importantly, to the success of the young lives we are able to touch and impact through our "Redirectional Therapy" which helps redirect behavior from negative to positive, from destructive to constructive. In the end the ultimate goal is to help our youth become productive and contributing members of their schools, community, and society as a whole.

Attached are also support letters from school principals to whom we provide services for their students. Also attached is a letter from Board members of the Kamehameha Homes Housing Community.

Thank you very much for your Support!

Warmest Regards,



McKay Schwenke,
Vice President.



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GOVERNOR



KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MAKAKILO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
92-675 ANIPEAHI STREET
KAPOLEI, HAWAII 96707
Ph: (808) 672-1122 Fax: (808) 672-1128

April 22, 2015

Dear Hawaii Community Foundation,

Makakilo Elementary supports Adult Friends for Youth's (AFY) Third Annual Student Anti-Bullying and Violence Convention (SABVC) to address bullying and violence among 4th and 5th grade students. For 20 years, AFY provided a statewide Student Transition Convention (STC) entitled "Moving on Up" for students transitioning from elementary school to middle/intermediate school. The convention focused on self-esteem, character development, addressed fears, and provided guidance on how to adjust to a new school, make friends, cope with peer pressure, and most importantly, to be safe. To address changing school and student needs, AFY has implemented the SABVC for the past two years. As a former attendee, our students have gained valuable knowledge about how to address bullying and violence.

We strongly support the SABVC and plan on attending every year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Fujimori", written over a horizontal line.

Todd Fujimori
Principal

DAVID IGE
GOVERNOR



KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Kalihi Waena Elementary
1240 Gulick Avenue
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819

April 9, 2015

Dear Hawaii Community Foundation,

Kalihi Waena Elementary supports Adult Friends for Youth's (AFY) Third Annual Student Anti-Bullying and Violence Convention (SABVC) to address bullying and violence among 4th and 5th grade students.

For 20 years, AFY provided a statewide Student Transition Convention (STC) entitled "Moving on Up" for students transitioning from elementary school to middle/intermediate school. The convention focused on self-esteem, character development, addressed fears, and provided guidance on how to adjust to a new school, make friends, cope with peer pressure, and most importantly, to be safe. To address changing school and student needs, AFY has implemented the SABVC for the past two years. As a former attendee, our students have gained valuable knowledge about how to address bullying and violence. We strongly support the SABVC and plan on attending every year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mrs. Ronnie Victor".

Mrs. Ronnie Victor, Principal



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KALIHI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2471 KULA KOLEA DRIVE
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819-2827

April 9, 2015

Dear Hawaii Community Foundation,

Kalihi Elementary School supports Adult Friends for Youth's (AFY) Third Annual Student Anti-Bullying and Violence Convention (SABVC) to address bullying and violence among 4th and 5th grade students.

For 20 years, AFY provided a statewide Student Transition Convention (STC) entitled "Moving on Up" for students transitioning from elementary school to middle/intermediate school. The convention focused on self-esteem, character development, addressed fears, and provided guidance on how to adjust to a new school, make friends, cope with peer pressure, and most importantly, to be safe. To address changing school and student needs, AFY has implemented the SABVC for the past two years. As a former attendee, our students have gained valuable knowledge about how to address bullying and violence. We strongly support the SABVC and plan on attending every year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Pila".

David Pila
Principal

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

KATHRYN MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
GOVERNOR SANFORD B. DOLE MIDDLE SCHOOL
1803 KAM IV ROAD
HONOLULU, HI 96819

February 3, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

The Adult Friends for Youth (AFY) program has been affiliated with Dole Middle School (DMS) for several years. The relationship established between students here at DMS and AFY continue throughout high school and into young adulthood. For several years, I was privy to have personally witnessed student lives benefitted, lives turned around, because of the adult mentoring that AFY provided to emotionally needy, gang affiliated students while as Principal at DMS. AFY presence is felt and seen on campus by all.

Dole has many troubled students afflicted with today's social ills such as drug and alcohol experimentation and abuse, prostitution, and gang related activities. Students from poverty who do not have strong supports at home need the extra support. Students with needs that go beyond what school counselor's expertise are assisted with mentors who have the time and expertise to dedicate to these students. These students need help outside of school hours and off school grounds. AFY is that dependable source of adult help to steer our wayward youth towards a healthy and productive lifestyle.

At the beginning of last school year (2013-14), there was a huge brawl on campus that started with two (2) young women that quickly grew into Chuukese students (male and female) verses Samoan students (male and female). It was so horrible it made the news! The AFY mentors assisted in settling down the factions and assisted with getting this campus settled. Their presence helped to keep the fighting between the two cultures from continuing into the community and to neighboring schools. They were also instrumental in counseling students to discuss their feelings and find positive outlets for their frustrations.

Each week AFY's counseling sessions included discussions on such topics as group unity, truancy, insubordination, alcohol and drugs, respect for oneself and others, identity issues, destructive and violent behaviors, culture, anger management, poor grades and education.

AFY conducted mediations between individuals and groups to help diffuse tension and resolve differences between parties. They worked with school administrators, security, parents and students to help address issues and concerns that provoke the harmony of the school. AFY promotes educational achievement and offers a prescription of hope to help reduce violent and destructive behaviors and help mediate issues off campus to prevent potential confrontations on campus.

This letter is written in support of providing any money available to be given to sustain the Adult Friends for Youth (AFY) program in it's work to positively affect errant youth. Money is well spent on our children and youth when it prevents them from making further bad choices that has a negative impact on society.

Please help us turn lives around and prevent incarceration by supporting the Adult Friends for Youth program. They are truly needed here at Dole Middle and in poverty stricken neighborhoods.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tiare Uli'i', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tiare Uli'i, Principal

DAVID IGE
GOVERNOR

KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT
ELDEN ESMERALDA
PRINCIPAL



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KAPOLEI HIGH SCHOOL
81-5007 KAPOLEI PARKWAY
KAPOLEI, HAWAII 96707
Phone: (808) 892-8200
Fax: (808) 892-8255

January 28, 2015

To Whom It May Concern;

As the principal of Kapolei High School I am writing this letter of support for Adult Friends for Youth (AFY). All of our communities on Oahu are faced with the issues that plague our high-risk youth. As the Kapolei community continues to grow so do the problems associated with such expansion.

During our six year relationship with AFY our data shows that violent actions have decreased steadily each year. I rely on AFY to provide intervention support for our students. AFY does this by holding weekly counseling sessions with students to discuss such topics as group unity, truancy, insubordination, alcohol and drugs. In addition they counsel the students regarding respect for oneself and others, identity issues, destructive and violent behaviors, culture, anger management, poor grades and education. Their mediation sessions have helped to resolve such conflicts between individuals and groups within our school and community.

Additionally AFY works directly with our administrators, counselors, teachers and security. Their updates and recommendations provide strategies for working with the student along with helping to create a positive climate on campus where everyone feels safe.

We are very fortunate to have Adult Friends for Youth on our campus. They play a vital role in instilling calm and appropriate values for our students. I ask for your support of AFY as their work essentially allows our students to flourish both academically and socially. Please feel free to call me at 808-305-8008 if you have any questions or email me at elden_esmeralda@notes.k12.hi.us

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elden Esmeralda", written over a horizontal line.

Elden M. Esmeralda
Kapolei High School
Principal

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



KATHRYN MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WAIPAHU HIGH SCHOOL
84-1211 FARRINGTON HIGHWAY
WAIPAHU, HI 96797

March 10, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Principal at Waipahu High School, I am writing in strong support of Adult Friends for Youth (AFY) regarding their valuable presence, and providing us with the essential services in working directly with our "high risk" student population on campus. For several years we have maintained this critical and committed partnership because of the positive impact that they have on our students' behaviors.

AFY services include weekly counseling sessions with students who have been identified with behavioral and anger issues. During these sessions students openly discuss various topics such as: group unity and cohesion; drugs and alcohol; respect for self and others; truancy; violent and destructive behaviors; discipline; sports and athletics, and; academic and cultural identity. Through these sessions students share their concerns and learn how to appropriately and strategically deal with their issues in a controlled manner. AFY staff effectively supports our students that have multitude of issues.

In addition to counseling, AFY also conducts regular mediation sessions between groups and individuals to help maintain a safe and peaceful campus environment. On many occasions the AFY staff walk the campus with other teachers during recess to help diffuse potentially problematic situations. They also work directly with most identified gang members and their groups to help resolve potential confrontations. Their work also extends beyond the campus, supporting students in the community to proactively resolve problems before students return to campus.

AFY services are invaluable and definitely needed. Through their effort, there has been a significant decline in fights, arrests, and suspensions. Their ability to connect with, and gain the respect of at-risk youth is incredible. Their absence on our campus due to lack of funding would be devastating for our affected students.

I hope that you will strongly consider their financial needs and requests so that they can continue their work in providing our students with the specialized and focused help that they need. I fully support the Adult Friends for Youth.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions 808-469-1311.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Hayashi".

Keith Hayashi
Principal

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
W. R. Farrington High School
1634 North King Street Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Al Carganilla, Principal at Farrington High School, and I am writing in support of Adult Friends for Youth (AFY) and the service they provide for our "high risk" students on our campus. Without this amazing partnership, our campus wouldn't be as safe and free of major gang issues as it currently is. We do have a lot of "high risk" students as well as increasing gang activity but due to the excellent work that AFY does, all the tensions and inappropriate behavior by these students are under control.

The services that AFY provides here at Farrington High School include weekly counseling sessions with students discussing such topics as group unity, truancy, insubordination, alcohol & drugs, respect for oneself and others, identity, destructive and violent behaviors, culture, anger management, poor grades, academics and athletics.

AFY also conducts mediations between individuals and groups to help diffuse tension and resolve differences between one another. Often times, this may include mediating issues off campus to prevent potential confrontations on campus. They also don't hesitate to make home visits that help ensure communication with parents and/or guardians.

Furthermore, AFY works with our social workers on our Peace Council to maintain communication and ease tensions between groups and gangs. The Peace Council is comprised of leaders of gangs that are identified on our campus. They help these students problem solve and process any issues that needs to be addressed.

The partnership with AFY is an incredible resource that will definitely hinder our school operations if taken away. AFY works with school administration, teachers, counselors and security to help address issues and concerns that might jeopardize the safety and harmony of the school and students. If students are involved with athletics, they also consult with athletic coaches to make sure that their academics are up to date and if there are any behaviors or concerns need to be addressed.

The great thing about AFY's services is the rapport they build with all these "high risk" students and the positive response and respect they get from the students. AFY staff is always professional and go out of their way to get things done. We can always count on them in time of crisis. All it takes is one phone call and one of their staff members are on their way to Farrington.

AFY is huge part in maintaining campus safety and the thought of not having their resource available scares me. The partnership has been a great asset not only to our faculty and staff at Farrington High School but more importantly to the thousands of students they have touched and helped throughout the years here in Kalihi.

Please consider having AFY continue to be a part of Farrington's School Community. The services they provide are second to none and a much needed resource moving forward. We certainly wouldn't be as successful as we are without their help.

If you need to get a hold of me, please call 832-3601. Thanks again.

Sincerely



Al Carganilla

Principal

Farrington High School

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

DAVID Y. ITO
GOVERNORKATHRYN S. MATAYOSI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LEILEHUA HIGH SCHOOL
1515 CALIFORNIA AVENUE
WAIHIAWA, HI 96786

February 3, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am honored and humbled to be able to write a letter of recommendation and support for Adult Friends for Youth (AFY). AFY's program is such a great asset to our entire school and community. The mentors/counselors genuinely care and always display professionalism. They have helped mold young men and women to make better decisions, set positive goals for themselves and to help them become lifelong learners which directly lead to future success.

AFY came in every Friday on set times and always called ahead of time to keep our counseling department informed of any changes or to reassure us that they will be on campus. They followed up with student's and faculty's concerns in a non-threatening and confidential manner. They asked for volunteer grade check and attendance forms that the students themselves took initiative to complete. I could see the positive relationship and trust being built. They even provided refreshments and activities on the weekends and helped the group grow closer to one another by organizing healthy activities for them to get involved with. I look forward to working with Adult Friends for Youth next year school year. No other outside organization has made such a positive impact in such a short time thanks to their staff.

AFY continues to provide weekly counseling sessions with students discussing such topics as group unity, truancy, insubordination, alcohol & drugs, respect for oneself and others, identity, destructive and violent behaviors, culture, anger management, poor grades and education. They also work with "high risk" students who we identified and normally referred to them for counseling. They also conduct mediations between individuals and groups to help diffuse tension and resolve differences between each other. AFY provides a vital service and needs continual support to continue its services.

I sincerely hope that AFY receives adequate funding to continue their much needed services on our campus. It would be a huge loss to us if their work was terminated due to lack of financial support.

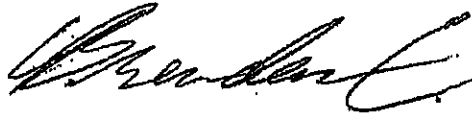
Please feel free to call me to discuss any concerns or questions you may have 383-7333

Warmest Regards,

Nolan Tokuda
Nolan Tokuda
Counselor

Jason Nakamoto
Jason Nakamoto
Principal

Bren C.



January 20, 2015

"How this group is beneficial to me"

For the past few months on Wednesdays I've been attending the friends for youth program that helps teens with any social, academic, health, or mental issues that they may face in a part of their lives. I see how much I progressed from attending there. Before my life felt like it was crushing on me like bricks and it made me feel confused, angered, and prone to self harm. Since then I've progressed in not only my life but in made me stronger spiritually and in my faith. I feel that this company does a lot of good for this school, for the teens really. They come from different rocky backgrounds, some are more serious than others.

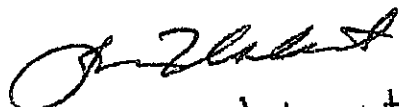
I think when your in the group, you tend to grow close to the friends you make in there and you soon become family in a sense. I feel more comfortable in there now and nobody puts anyone down. Of course there are a few who tend not to see the ultimate goal of attending this program, they put no effort into it, and see it just as a "get-out-of-class" card. None of the boys have the same background, yet most of them created the same habit of "burning". My theory is that these guys still have personal circumstances to still overcome and the only way they can gain a temporary contentment is from burning.

These are the kind of people society tends to judge by the cover. Since attending I've been discovering these students' skills or talents that most people wouldn't think they'd have. Some have amazing poetry kills, some are really smart when it comes to debating, some can draw and write whatever comes to their minds, and so I always encourage their creativity so

they can realize that they do have potential to do great things in their lives. The group is a very useful program for these teens as well as I.

best program on campus. please continue to
provide this badly needed service. God Bless.
Nolan
Graham
(counselor)

Thank you for supporting our students.



Jason Nakamoto
Leilehua High School, Principal

NEAL AMERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JAMES CAMPBELL HIGH SCHOOL
91-980 North Road
Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706

December 17, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in full support of the work and services that Adult Friends for Youth (AFY) has provided for "high risk" students on our campus for the past several years. I am convinced that their work has made a lasting positive impact to many of the students they have counseled. AFY has managed to build relationships with many students and helped effect meaningful changes in their lives, such as graduating from high school and other alternative programs.

At one time, many were in doubt of graduating. Many had probation officers and would miss school to attend court hearings for various offenses. As a result, school attendance and work were affected and students struggled to pass their classes. Through all of these challenges, AFY continued to help students in weekly counseling sessions to deal with multiple issues, such as drugs and alcohol abuse, anger management, truancy, fighting and bullying.

Students learned how to deal with problems without exhibiting violence and aggression. The sessions also addressed conflict and resolution and how to arrive at a non-threatening and peaceful conclusion.

AFY's work on our campus has been both beneficial and rewarding. Furthermore, our campus has seen a definite reduction in violence and fights due to their efforts. We hope to continue our ongoing partnership and relationship with them for years to come.

I support AFY's efforts to get the necessary financial resources and funding to continue their much needed services here at Campbell High School and surrounding communities. I support their hard work, passion and perseverance to help make James Campbell High School a safe and thriving school for our students and families.

Please feel free to contact me at 687-3000 if you have any questions.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Naomi Takamori".

Naomi Takamori

Principal

James Campbell High School

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

May 1, 2015

Dear Council Members,

Aloha! We are Zara and Gary Aki, and we are residents of Kamehameha Homes. We also are active within our Community here, and have been Board Members for our Kamehameha Homes Tenant Association since 1997. Our 3 children are grown and on their own leading a very productive life. We have 7 grandsons, and they're a blessing and joy to us. It's just the 2 of us, yet we continue to do volunteer work for our Community simply because we care about our neighbors and because this is home. We became aware of AFY when our son, (our youngest) was attending Kalakaua Middle School. He became a client of theirs and Debbie was his worker. While being involved with AFY, he adjusted and learned from them. To this day, he will quote what he was taught. "the choices you make today, may determine your future." Kinohi had some issues still, but Debbie periodically checked on him throughout the years. When he graduated in 2001, like most young men, didn't know what he wanted to do, wasn't sure if he should give college a try. But, he did. Debbie walked him through the process, helped with all the paperwork, and for the first week or so picked him up and took him to HCC. All we asked of our son, was to give it a shot and see if you like it or not. When everyone had doubts about Kinohi, and when he was down about himself, Debbie was there for support and guidance. For that, we are so grateful and appreciative.

When HPHA had funds available for Associations to benefit their Communities, our KHTA Board, chose AFY as one of the agency to come in and work within our Community and with our kids. With our experience with AFY, it was agreed among our Executive Board to select them and hopefully they would come here to service our Community, and they did. We even had classes for Adults with Ms. Terry Fisher, and we had a great time sharing and learning about ourselves. We also became more aware of the scope of service that they provide for the youth. It is unreal. However, we know that they need monies to continue the service that they were providing. Sad to say that when the funds from HPHA ran out, so did the service. But, AFY didn't allow that to stop them. They continued to work with the kids and we believe that they made a difference in their lives.

Recently, we've come together again due to the increase in the Gang Activity/ Violence that have been taking place. These Gangs congregate here at Kamehameha Homes, and they fight. I'm talking about 50 plus kids, with no respect and a whole bunch of attitude! They stop traffic on King Street, and here on Haka Drive. They had weapons on them and they would throw them at the other kids who they were fighting with. They had pipes, sticks, rocks, a machete was seen, it was extremely dangerous for us. They would scale the outside walls of Kamehameha Homes and they would be all over our Community. Police are called, but they are quick to run away as soon as they see or hear a police siren. Since last September, our Association have worked side by side with Farrington High School, HPD/ Weed and Seed, AFY, and HPHA. We have had 2 Community based meetings here at our Hall to discuss and try to come up with positive solutions, or an action plan to address this. At our last meeting which was held on April 9th, we invited some Legislators with various agencies, Farrington and McKinley High School, and HPHA to meet with our residents, and just to let everyone know that this is some serious business. Through the planning process and in us seeking advice, it was AFY who stood by us and guided and supported us. AFY is currently working with the Gangs that have been fighting and we see positive results. There have been no current fights here. In this last meeting, it was reported to us that AFY was awarded a grant that they applied for. However, that grant did not come through. For whatever reason, the State did not grant them their money. This is very sad. When an agency such as AFY, who does terrific work with our youth in trying to steer them on the right path, to have funding pulled out from under them, yet do they expect AFY's staff to continue their work for free? Here you have a credited agency whose work record speaks for itself, where the staff is on call 24/7, and they scrambling for monies to implement their program, yet whenever there is a type of Gang Violence/ Fight, AFY is the

one everyone calls for. Come on people, wake up!!! Please, support AFY and the work that they do for us. They need help. We need help to insure the safety of our kids and grandkids. We are appalled at how the State prioritize their selection on who gets their funding and who doesn't. We plead with all of you to please support AFY and their ongoing work, and to please help them with funding. To lose their service would be very crucial to a lot of families and Communities.

Thank you for taking the time to address our Support letter.

Mahalo,

Zara Aki / President KHHA
Zara Aki
President, Kamehameha Homes Tenant Association

Gary Aki / Sgt of Arms
Gary Aki
Sergeant of Arms, Kamehameha Homes Tenant Association